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## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- A nontoxic environmentally compatible insect deterrent composition comprising, a solution or dispersion of a surfactant in an amount sufficient to interfere with vital functions of an insect and a nontoxic water soluble or dispersible thickening agent admixed therewith, such that the insect is debilitated or killed thereby when the solution is applied to the body of the insect.
- 2. The composition of claim 1 wherein the thickening agent is a water soluble or dispersible carbohydrate for increasing the viscosity of the composition.
- 3. The composition of claim 1 wherein the surfactant is a synthetic organic surfactant.
- 4. The composition of claim 3 wherein the surfactant is selected from the group consisting of a nonionic, amphoteric, and cationic surfactant.
- 5. The composition of claim 4 wherein the thickening agent is selected from the group consisting of protein, carbohydrate and water soluble or water dispersible synthetic polymer.

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The composition of claim 1 including a source of biocompatible cations selected form the group consisting of the alkalic metal ions of potassium and sodium, the alkali-earth metal ions of calcium and magnesium and a water soluble or dispersible cation that contains boron or copper.

7. The composition of claim 1 wherein the composition is applied to the body of the insect by being formed into a spray that is sprayed into the air to form an aerosol.

The composition of claim 1 wherein the composition includes a thickening agent and a source of cations for thickening the consistency of the composition.

9. The composition of claim 1 including a biocompatible preservative for extending the shelf life thereof.

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A method of debilitating or killing insects comprising the steps of:

providing an aqueous composition for debilitating or killing an insect,
sensing the presence of the insect and
spraying the composition in the direction of the insect.

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11. A method of debilitating or killing insects comprising the steps of:

providing an insect control composition according to any of claims 1-9,

sensing the presence of the insect, and spraying the composition in the direction of the insect.

- 12. The method of claim 10 including, providing a sensing means for sensing the presence of the insect and placing an insect attractant proximate the sensing means for drawing the insects toward the sensing means.
- 13. The method of claim 12 wherein the attractant is selected from the group consisting of a plant extract, perfume, an animal component, pheromone, carbon dioxide, heat, water vapor and light.
- 14. The method of claim 12 wherein the composition comprises an aqueous solution or dispersion of a surfactant in an amount sufficient to interfere with vital functions of an insect and a nontoxic water soluble or dispersible thickening agent admixed therewith, such that the insect is debilitated or killed thereby when the solution is applied to the body of the insect.
- 15. The method of claim 10 including, providing a control circuit for sensing insect sounds between about 50 Hz and 1500 Hz and spraying the composition responsive to insect sounds sensed by said circuit.
- 16. The method of claim 15 wherein the composition comprises an aqueous solution or dispersion of a surfactant in an amount sufficient to interfere with

vital functions of an insect and a nontoxic water soluble or dispersible thickening agent admixed therewith, such that the insect is debilitated or killed thereby when the solution is applied to the body of the insect.